



Susan Bysiewicz
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
CONNECTICUT

For Immediate Release:
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- NEWS RELEASE -

SECRETARY OF THE STATE INITIATES INVESTIGATION OF LOCAL VOTER REGISTRATION ROLLS

BYSIEWICZ TAKES ACTION TO ENSURE ACCURACY OF LOCAL VOTER LISTS

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz has initiated an investigation by the State Elections Enforcement Commission to determine whether locally elected Registrars of Voters and Town Clerks failed to properly remove deceased voters from voter rolls. Secretary Bysiewicz has also issued a Declaratory Ruling in accordance with section 9-3 of the Connecticut General Statutes ordering all city and town clerks to immediately provide their local registrars with death notices dating back to the last time such notice was disseminated.

"The integrity of the voting process is paramount here in Connecticut," said Bysiewicz. "That is why I am urging the State Elections Enforcement Commission to conduct a full investigation to determine if locally elected Registrars of Voters and Town Clerks failed to properly remove deceased voters from voter rolls. I want to thank the University of Connecticut for bringing to light these discrepancies and I am pleased their investigation found no evidence of voter fraud."

Under state statute 7-42, town clerks, on a monthly basis, are required to provide registrars of voters with updated notices of death for all citizens over the age of 17. The Secretary Bysiewicz has secured a commitment from the state Department of Public Health to request their Consolidated Master Death File dating back to 1974 in order to match that file with the state's centralized voter registration database. The results of that comparison will be forwarded to local registrars of voters to assist in the removal of deceased voters and to the State Election Enforcement Commission to assist in their investigation.

“Sloppy lists only compound human error,” said Bysiewicz. “Our voter rolls are only as good as the lists produced at the local level. That is why I am stepping in and working with both the Department of Public Health and the State Elections Enforcement Division to ensure we greatly reduce any chance of voter fraud come Election Day.”

In her letter to Jeffrey Garfield, Director of the State election enforcement commission, Bysiewicz wrote “I have contacted Commissioner Robert Galvin of the Department of Public Health and he has committed to assisting our office in matching the vital statistics registry with our centralized voter registration database to determine how many deceased persons remain on lists statewide. As we approach the national election in November, it is critical that your office expedite this investigation and take enforcement and corrective action to ensure that voter lists are accurate and up-to-date.”

Pursuant to the General Statutes the registers of voters are required annually conduct a canvass of the voter rolls. This canvass is used to identify individuals who should no longer be on the official list because they have moved out of town, had their voting rights revoked, or died.

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April 21, 2008

Mr. Jeffrey Garfield
Executive Director
State Elections Enforcement Commission
18-20 Trinity Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Mr. Garfield:

I am filing this formal Complaint pursuant Section 9-7b of the Connecticut General Statutes. Specifically, I am writing because it has come to my attention through an article published in The Hartford Courant on Sunday, April 20, 2008 that information has been obtained by the University of Connecticut, which, if true, raises serious questions regarding the accuracy of voter lists and possible election law violations. It is our understanding that UCONN looked at forty-nine (49) towns. My staff have made inquiries over the past twenty-four (24) hours and we have obtained evidence to substantiate some of these allegations. Since the issues raised suggest broad-scale violation of election laws by local officials, we expect that you will review all of the information compiled by UCONN and trust that your investigation will include all 169 municipalities.

Today I have contacted Commissioner Robert Galvin of the Department of Public Health and he has committed to assisting our office in matching the vital statistics registry with our centralized voter registration database to determine how many deceased persons remain on lists statewide. As we approach the national election in November, it is critical

that your office expedite this investigation and take enforcement and corrective action to ensure that voter lists are accurate and up-to-date.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Susan Bysiewicz
Secretary of the State of Connecticut